CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Previously Presented) An implant for promoting intervertebral fusion, comprising:

a cage having two sidewalls, a posterior back wall, an open top, an open bottom, and an open front, such that when viewed from above the sidewalls and back wall form a U-shape;

each sidewall having a convex upper edge and a substantially flat lower edge, such that when viewed from the side, the upper and lower edges conform to outwardly curved and flat planes, respectively, with no portions of the cage extending outwardly beyond either plane;

the front opening allowing the cage to be packed with bone graft and/or biologic materials *in situ* using an anterior approach; and

a physically separate, rigid gate element for closing the open front after the cage is positioned in an intervertebral disc space and packed with bone graft and/or biologic materials.

2. (Original) The implant of claim 1, wherein the cage and gate are constructed of a radiolucent material.

3. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, wherein the cage and gate are constructed of carbon fiber.

4. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, wherein:

the cage is constructed of a radiolucent material; and

further including one or more radiopaque markers on the cage.

5. (Original) The implant of claim 1, wherein the backwall is indented to minimize neurocompression.

6. (Original) The implant of claim 1, wherein the backwall is expandable so that the sidewalls can be closer together for insertion and spread apart after implantation.

7. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, wherein:

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the sidewalls have a posterior height and an anterior height; and

wherein the posterior height is less than the anterior height, thereby forming a trapezoid.

8. (Currently Amended) The implant of claim 7, wherein the anterior height, posterior height, or both, are ~~different~~ sized to accommodate ~~different~~ a particular vertebral level ~~levels~~.

9. (Original) The implant of claim 1, further including one or more jigs for fixing the cage in position, including a jig for driving a screw through an upper vertebra into the cage or through the cage into a lower vertebra.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, wherein:

the backwall has opposing lateral edges; and

wherein each sidewall is rigidly affixed to the backwall at the lateral edges.

12. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, further including:

an expandable backwall with opposing lateral edges; and

wherein each sidewall is rigidly affixed to the backwall at the lateral edges.

13. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, further including:

an expandable backwall; and

wherein the sidewalls are generally parallel to one another before and after the expansion of the backwall.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, wherein:

the sidewalls terminate in anterior edges; and

wherein the gate element extends to each anterior edge.

16. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 1, wherein the sidewalls are generally parallel to one another.

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